

# ***Coalition Bulletin***

A publication of the Coalition fighting the Global War on Terrorism

Volume #23, May, 2005



**ANA OFFICERS SCHOOL  
REACHES AUTONOMY**

**ORTHODOX EASTER IN  
"CĂLUGĂRENI" BATTALION**

**ITALIANS SAY:  
"THAT WORKS!!!"**



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By the generous permission of our NATO partners, the *Coalition Bulletin* is pleased to bring you stories covering the activities of the International Security Assistance Force. As ISAF and the Coalition are separate entities, ISAF stories will be denoted by the NATO logo at the top of each page when they appear.

**Cover photo:** A Marine from the Republic of Korea entertains the locals in Afghanistan with traditional music.

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## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*“All people of Aghanistan want rank-and-file Taliban fighters brought back into society, along with moderate leaders who renounce the continuing insurgency and support the government.”*

**Hamid Karzai,**  
President of Afghanistan



# Editorial

This is my last editorial as Chairman of the Public Awareness Working Group (PAWG). Later this month I will hand over to my colleague and good friend, Brig. Gen. Tariq Khan from Pakistan.



Working with other Coalition members on the PAWG has been a privilege and a pleasure. Some, particularly the Editor-in-Chief and his Editorial staff who are here working full time on Coalition Public Affairs matters, have had training and experience in this very important field.

Others on the Committee, depending upon their military backgrounds, have usually had limited experience in public affairs. They are required to carry out their prime function with respective National Liaison Teams, and so may not always have sufficient time to devote to Public Affairs.

Regardless of their background, everyone in the Group has worked enthusiastically to ensure that the message about the achievements of this Coalition, the largest ever assembled, is spread as widely as possible.

The Coalition PAWG was established to raise international awareness of country contributions to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). One of the main ways this has been achieved has been through this monthly magazine, the Coalition Bulletin. The Bulletin is published in Arabic as well as English, and is distributed widely to political, diplomatic, military and media organizations. It also has a wide readership among the general public.

Another role of the PAWG has been to facilitate general media training for Coalition members. This has occurred on several occasions, and has been a useful experience for those who have taken part. Many media representatives have visited the Coalition 'Village' at HQ USCENTCOM at MacDill AFB in Tampa, and the value of media training has been put into practice by the Coalition representatives in the many interviews that have taken place.

It is fitting to acknowledge the excellent support provided by USCENTCOM staff, particularly those working in the Public Affairs Center. It has been a very good working relationship. USCENTCOM has also provided generous funding to ensure that the Coalition Bulletin is produced and distributed.

The contribution of the Coalition in the GWOT is an important one. Too often it is only the bad news that gets publicity. It is now more important than ever to inform the public of the successes of the Coalition in the GWOT, and the PAWG plays an important role in achieving this.

**Neville Reilly**

Brigadier-General, New Zealand

Chairman, Public Awareness Working Group



## Norway Donates Tents to Afghan Army



**K**ABUL, Afghanistan – Though its force is relatively small when compared to some of its Coalition partners in Afghanistan, the 360-soldier Norwegian Army contingent is certainly doing its part to support the rebuilding of Afghanistan (the population of Norway is about 4.5 million people – **CB**).

In a ceremony held on the outskirts of Kabul at Camp Invictia, the Norwegian contingent presented a large donation of tents and related support equipment to the Afghan National Army.

The donation, valued at \$450,000, consists of 150 complete tent kits. Each tent is 14 square meters in size and comes complete with a stove, two tables and a transport case. According to Col. Tor Saether, commander of the Norwegian contingent, the tents offer the ANA many options. "They can be used as accommodations, field dining rooms or even as field offices," he said.

Since 2003, the international community has provided a steady stream of effort and resources toward the continued growth of the ANA. Equipping and manning the ANA is crucial to establishing a secure Afghanistan, and many nations have presented large donations to help meet this goal.


While the Afghan Army continues to grow, this donation was possible because Norway has recently decreased the size of its own army. Jan Erik Leikvang, the Norwegian ambassador to Afghanistan, said, "We are very happy to be able to make this donation; the equipment can be put to proper use here."

Accepting the donation on behalf of the ANA were Maj. Gen. Shah Aqua Haidary, deputy assistant minister for logistics and material readiness, and Brig. Gen. Ghulam Haider, commander of the ANA's Logistics Command.

Addressing the ceremony attendees, Haidary thanked Norway for its support and noted other generous equipment donations the Norwegians have provided to his country. "I want to express my appreciation to the country of Norway for this donation," he said. "As Norway is helping us with our military equipment, they have also helped us with donations of ambulances and medical equipment for our civilian hospitals."

At the end of the ceremony, transfer documents were signed by Saether, Haidary and Lt. Col. David Braxton, logistics operations chief at the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan, to formalize the donation.

Braxton, who coordinates ANA donations for OMC-A, also holds Norway's contributions in high regard. "The Norwegians have been an excellent partner in providing support to the ANA, and their efforts are very much appreciated."

Saether said the donation had special importance to his country. "We are doing this in appreciation of Afghanistan and especially the ANA because we know the Afghan people have suffered very much in the last decades and we want to assist them to get back on track again." 



# Afghan National Army Staff Officers School Reaches Autonomy



Diploma and award given by French senior representative, Col. de Reviers to a successful ANA staff officer.

Story by Maj Frédéric Feuillâtre,  
Information Advisor to the  
French Contingent Commander  
Photos by WO2<sup>nd</sup> Dubois

Activity levels were higher than usual that day in the compound of the Kabul Command and General Staff College.

tion who received their awards, for Major General Salem who took the overall attendances of the school he has been at the head of for more than a year now, and not the least for Afghan National Army who has got a new unit now, with its own flag, the CGSC.

Under presidency of General Bismullah Khan, Chief of the Defence Staff, military officials from the ANA defence staff honoured the ceremony with their presence. A delegation from the Office of Military Cooperation in Afghanistan and CJTF-Phoenix, commanded by Brigadier General (US) Moorehead, were also present. The French delegation was lead by Colonel de Reviers, French military senior representative in Afghanistan.

Lieutenant General (Fr) Amarger, director of the Command and General Staff College in Compiègne came from France to assist the ceremony. He declared "Today is therefore the result of 18 months of work in preparing and executing the mission of building up an Afghan CGSC. This ceremony marks not only the success of the commitment of French Army officers, NCOs' and soldiers to the mission but also the capability of the Afghan Army to take over and continue the task on its own."



First presentation during a parade for the flag of the Command and General Staff College.



The French ambassador, close to General Moorehead, and Major General Amarger salute the new flag.

The purpose of the days parade was important: for the officers of the 5th promo-

tion of the ANA as soon as they end their formal tuition.

For the 30 men strong French military training team of the eleventh detachment, this ceremony marked an achievement and the end to an outstanding mission, alongside their Afghan counterparts, among them some became friends and in all cases mutual respect was the key of success. At the date of May the 1st the school and teaching will be in Afghan hands, the French providing an assistance cell, and it will be a new step in ANA built up. <sup>CB</sup>

## French Military Training Team, Facts and Figures:

- 311 is the number of staff officers who received their CGSC diploma between February the 7<sup>th</sup> of 2004 and April 27<sup>th</sup> of 2005.
  - 372 is the number of hours a staff officer has to complete to graduate.
  - 11 French military training teams involved in Afghan National Army formations since May the 29<sup>th</sup> of 2002.
  - 16 in place of 12 are going to be the number of weeks required in the new CGSC course, commencing spring 2005.
  - 250 officers attended selection to enter CGSC, 120 were admitted to written tests, and 60 were allowed to follow the course. These are the average figures of selection rate for each promotion.
  - Buzkashi and More – Kohe (mountain snake) are the names of the two exercises at brigade level in which the officers participate.
  - Owl looking over a map of Afghanistan is the insignia chosen to be the symbol of intelligence officer's insignia (Owl being a stealth predator using the cover of the night to hunt its prey).
- Artillery, engineer support, and combat service support are going to be the three new specialities French advisors will teach at CGSC during next courses.





# Orthodox Easter in “Călugăreni” Battalion



Nicolae Postolea, the priest of “Calugareni” Battalion during the Easter service.


**Story and photos by  
Capt Carol Florea,  
Romanian Battalion “Calugareni” PIO**

**C**AMP MITTICA, Iraq – The Christian joy of the Orthodox Easter brought together people from US, Italy and Romania during the holy night when an Easter service was performed in the Romanian 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion “Călugăreni” base by the Romanian priest Nicolae Postolea in the small chapel

set up by the Romanian soldiers.

Among the people invited to attend the religious ceremony were BG Visarion Neagoe the deputy commander of the Romanian 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint Operational HQ, BG Pietro Constantino, the commander of the ITJTF and US colonels Dennis Diggett – 407 AEG commander and Roger Gerber – US Corps of Engineers commander, and personnel from the US, Italian and Romanian contingents.

The Romanian priest Nicolae Postolea said: “Regardless of the day when Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and the date when Easter is celebrated, the most important thing is that Jesus Christ was resurrected for all Christian peoples.”

The service was followed by an Easter dinner when the guests were served some Romanian Easter food specialties – red eggs, lamb steak and Easter cake. 



The Light is spread for all participants of the Easter service.



Romanian Brig. Gen. Visarion Neagoe (center right) and U.S. Col. Gerber Roger (center left) among prayers.





# Ukraine Remains Committed to the Coalition Until the Mission in Iraq Is Accomplished

By Maj. Gen. Petro Haraschuk, SNR,  
Armed Forces of Ukraine, Tampa

**M**ore than 100 days have passed since the President of Ukraine Victor Yushchenko, in Brussels, reaffirmed his country's desire to integrate into NATO and other European and world structures. By now there is no other aim for Ukraine than to move towards Euro-integration in both domestic and foreign policy.

Back in Kyiv, political and military officials of the country warmly appreciated the line of a new Ukrainian government. Head of Verkhovna Rada (Supreme Council of Ukraine), Volodymyr Lytvyn, has offered full congressional support for joining NATO and the EU. But rather than initial integration, people of Ukraine are interested in implementation of common democratic values in the country. The widespread fight against corruption in Ukraine meets resistance from the former "regime elites" from time to time. But the Ukrainian people who once surprised the world with their firm will, will not let the society return back to how things were before.

On the path to EU, Ukraine is drawing up a "Road Map" (the basic action plan) for the current year. President of Ukraine Victor Yushchenko has outlined this following his speech in the European parliament in Strasbourg.

According to the Ukrainian President, among key provisions of the plan is to obtain a market economy nation status in the first half of the current year; to hold talks and to complete technical procedures for Ukraine's entrance in World Trade Or-

ganization by November; to begin consultations on setting up a free trade zone between Ukraine and the EU; to sign agreements on a simplified visa regime; and to conform Ukrainian border and customs procedures with EU standards.



Senior National Representative of Armed Forces of Ukraine at U.S. Central Command Maj. Gen. Petro Haraschuk explains USCENTCOM Commander Gen. John Abizaid the strategy of the Ukrainian mission in Iraq.

The initiatives of the new Ukrainian government were widely supported by the world community of nations. Ukraine appreciates understanding of its aspiration by all European leaders and U.S. President George Bush, who had signaled his country's desire to see Ukraine in NATO and in the European community. For Ukraine, the striving for democratic values also means acceleration in achieving its ultimate aim in Iraq – training the Iraqi troops as fast as possible to replace the Ukrainian peacekeeping contingent.

By the mid of May 2005 Ukrainian military instructors manned and trained two infantry battalions for Iraqi Armed Forces' 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade (totally more than 1,000 Iraqi soldiers), and about 350 personnel for the

frontier guard, who already augment the Iraqi 3<sup>rd</sup> Frontier Guard Division. That let Ukraine downsize the peacekeeping contingent since its last rotation in April. Now 864 soldiers of the 81st Detached Tactical Group (DTG) represent Ukraine in Iraq.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Detached Mechanized Brigade (DMB) of about 1,500 personnel and 370 military vehicles commenced fulfilling its tasks in Iraq on September 22, 2004. During more than six months staying in Wazit its soldiers carried out 800 convoys and 4,500 patrols. Each of military drivers covered about 10,000 km (6,250 miles) of Iraqi roads, in total vehicles of 7<sup>th</sup> DMB covered more than 2,000,000 km (1,250,000 miles).

Additionally, 47 persons suspected of participation in terrorist activity were detained and passed to the local law enforcement organizations. A significant amount of weapons and ammunitions were confiscated. Acting together in cooperation with a Kazakhstan field engineering



Ukrainian soldier checks the papers of a Iraqi worker before allowing entry to the base in Al Kut.

detachment, which was included in structure of 7<sup>th</sup> DMB, Ukrainian soldiers defused and destroyed more than 80,000 items of ammunition and unexploded ordnance that included shells, self-propelled and hand grenades, field mines, and air and mortar bombs.

The 7<sup>th</sup> brigade Civil-Military Cooperation detachment developed and completed more than 100 significant civilian projects, at a cost of more than \$U.S. 3,7



# Italians Say: "That Works!!!"

**Story By**  
**Lt. Col. Mario Luppa,**  
**Italian AF**

million. Ukrainian soldiers helped Iraqis repair and refurbish schools, hospitals, kindergartens, and monuments; restore water-supply lines and sewer systems, supplied the local population with drinking water, provided local government organizations and media with furniture and office equipment. The Ukrainian military doctors from the brigade medical company treated more than 5,500 patients.

81<sup>st</sup> DTG includes administration staff, four airmobile, one reconnaissance and one military police companies, a mortar battery, engineering and chemical warfare platoons. Administration additionally includes units for government institutions' support and military assistance, and two officers for religious issues.

Apart from patrolling, cargo escort and camp defense, activity of the 81<sup>st</sup> DTG will be mainly focused on the enhancement of training for Iraqi troops. As Ukraine reduces its peacekeeping contingent little by little, coordinating this planning with other Coalition members, first of all Poland and the U.S., it will remain part of the Coalition until the mission in Iraq is accomplished.

In his first speech to the local population (Ukrainian peacekeeping contingent is located in Al Kut, Province of Wazit) Commander of 81<sup>st</sup> DTG, Major General Serhii Goroshnikov, in particular thanked the personnel of the recently rotated 7<sup>th</sup> DMB for the huge contribution made in maintaining peace and stability in the region. <sup>CB</sup>

**T**he Italian Troops in Nassyria are fully involved in the training of the New Iraqi Army and Police Services. That activity goes from the tactical training of unlisted soldiers, up to squad and Platoon level, to the organization of the C2 structure of the 604 Battalion and the HQs of the 72 Brigade of the Iraqi Army.

Every morning the escorted convoy of Italian Instructors leaves Camp Mittica and heads to White Horse Iraqi Army Base which, once the Italian main base in Iraq, was handed over to the Iraqi Army in December 04. At White Horse the Italian Instructors amalgamate into the Iraqi units and put their experience of professional soldiering to the advantage of their loyal local comrades.

At the moment the core of tactical training is based on teaching techniques and tactics in MOUT (Military Operations in Urban Terrain) and each sol-

dier is trained and is required to perform on a squad and platoon level basis.

"Iraqi personnel are very keen to learn, and their attitude and discipline is outstanding. It is clear they

understand how much their own country needs a proper and well trained Army. We use their sense of pride and natural competition between young men to improve the quality and the result of the training. And it works!" says Colonel Carletti the leader of SSR (Security Sector Reform) Branch in the Italian Joint Cell in Nassyria.

"If they keep going that way I am sure they will become reliable soldiers in a few months



Training of Iraqi National Guard.

time. I am also fully aware that the Instructor of the *Folgore* Paratrooper Brigade (The Brigade that will replace *Garibaldi* Bersaglieri Brigade at the end of next April) will dedicate the same passion and expertise in the training of the New Iraqi Army. As all Italians are good at that, they will be able to establish the same relation of respect and camaraderie which is now helping the work between Iraqi soldiers and Italian Bersaglieri." <sup>CB</sup>

Training on Explosive Ordnance Disposal.







# Marines, Azerbaijani Army Dam Insurgent Activity



On photos: Approximately 150 troops from the oil-rich former Soviet satellite state are currently here providing security to one of Iraq's key infrastructures, freeing the Marines to conduct security and stability operations in the Hit-Hadithah corridor. Prior to beginning their tour at the dam in January, the Azerbaijanis completed six months of basic training in their native country. Azerbaijani soldiers serve either six months or one year in Iraq, depending on their enlistment.

**Story by**  
**Lance Cpl. Marc Fencil**

**H**ADITHAH DAM, Iraq – Nearly two months have passed since the Marines and Sailors of 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment made Hadithah Dam their home. However, America's warriors are not the only ones calling the dam "Home-Sweet-Home".

Their fellow residents' green camouflage uniforms in the middle of the desert and heel-driving march sets them apart from their Marine comrades-in-arms.

The Marines simply call these neighbors the "AZ's." The letters "AZ" are not the Greek letters of a new sorority on deck. Rather, it is the nickname of the Azerbaijani soldiers, whose sole responsibility is keeping the walls and waters of Hadithah Dam secure.

"Having the Azerbaijani Army unit at Hadithah Dam, allows the Marines of my battalion to be on the roads and in the Al-Anbar cities and towns. That's where the terrorists are and that's where we have to go to provide security for the innocent Iraqi people," said Lt. Col. Lionel B. Urquhart, the battalion commander.

Approximately 150 troops from the oil-rich former Soviet satellite state are currently here providing security to one of Iraq's key infrastructures, freeing the Marines to conduct security and stability operations in the Hit-Hadithah corridor.

Prior to beginning their tour at the dam in January, the Azerbaijanis completed six

months of basic training in their native country. Azerbaijani soldiers serve either six months or one year in Iraq, depending on their enlistment.

"Our soldiers received all the training that make them successful here in Iraq; marksmanship, crowd control, communications, and setting up checkpoints," explained 39-year-old Maj. Elkhan Shalbuzov, the Azerbaijani company commander. The major is from Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan.

Relations between the Marines and Azerbaijani's are amicable. However, a language barrier exists between the communities.

"We use hand gestures instead of verbal communication to better understand each other," explained Cpl. Daniel K. Smith, a 23-year-old food





service specialist with H&S Company. "I try not to use facial expressions when I talk with them so they don't wrongly interpret what I'm saying," added the Cleveland Heights, Ohio native.

The vast majority of Azerbaijanis speak Azeri and a small number have knowledge of Russian and English. Most Azerbaijanis know at least a few simple, everyday English greetings to use with the Marines.

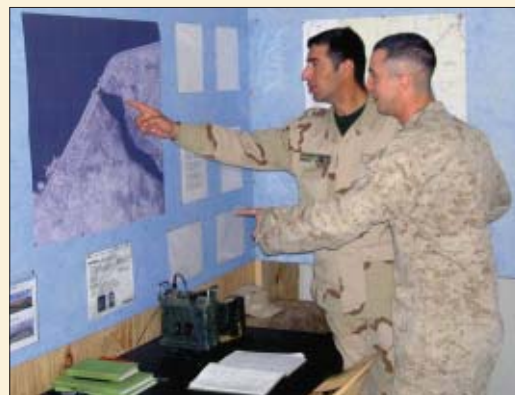
Language isn't their only barrier though. The two forces live in separate areas of the dam. One wing of the

Both Marines and AZs alleviate boredom by working out in the dam's sparsely equipped gym and using Instant Messenger in the Segovia Internet café to talk with friends back home.

"I workout all the time and I notice that the Azerbaijanis will copy some of the exercises that Marines are doing in the gym and vice versa," observed Lance Cpl. Eric M. Montgomery, a 21-year-old a field radio operator with Company L.

This time that these troops do spend together leave some Marines curious about the AZ's, who gained their inde-

Marines are also perplexed by the Azerbaijani rank structure, which gives the impression of "too many Indians and not enough chiefs." The Marines are used to a highly structured system of ranks easily discernable by their chevrons. The junior enlisted soldiers who make up the bulk of the Azerbaijani Army don't wear rank on their utilities.




"It's hard to tell the enlisted soldiers from the officers since they don't wear chevrons like we do," stated Lance Cpl. Sean M. Hathaway, a 21-year-old field radio operator with H&S Company.

Another aspect of the Azerbaijani Army that the Marines find curious is that they are not an all-volunteer force like the Marine Corps. The central Asian nation requires military service from eligible males. Males enrolled in a university serve one year and all others serve a year and a half.

soldiers take their mission of protecting Hadithah Dam very seriously, whether on patrol or guarding an entry control point. Well disciplined and ever vigilant, the Azerbaijanis are a formidable deterrent to would be attackers of this important source of Iraqi electrical power," stated Urquhart.

"We have a good relationship. The Americans send a military delegation to my country every couple months," Maj. Shalbuzov said. "They have provided my army with mine detectors, hundreds of radios, and other equipment."

These young Americans and Azerbaijanis have come together in Hadithah long enough to realize that they are here for the same reason; the common desire for a free and stable Iraq that began as a mutual alliance at the outbreak of Operation Iraq Freedom in March 2003 in support of the GWOT. 

Though members

of each country's military service have their own unique traditions and procedures, their cooperation demonstrates that these two allies work effectively together. "The Azerbaijani



**On photos:** The AZ's man a series of observation posts along both the river and the lake side of Hadithah Dam. Their sole responsibility is keeping the dam and the perimeter secure.

dam is Azerbaijani territory while the Marines occupy the other wing.

The segregation is due to the need for accountability and unit integrity.

There are some things enjoyed by everyone no matter what uniform a soldier puts on in the morning.

pendence in 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Republic and are eager to inquire about their weaponry, customs and home country.

"I'm curious to know how much funding their military receives in comparison to ours," said Sgt. Carl D. Nelson, H&S Company's 24-year-old admin chief from Niles, Ohio.



# When Energy Can Move Mountains, and Give Women Better Health



There's no burden too heavy for Major (OF3) Dubourg, doctor of the French battalion, when the purpose is to give a hand to women in need.

**Story by Maj Frédéric Feuillâtre,  
Information Advisor to the  
French Contingent Commander  
Photos by SSGT Kalavsky**

**T**hat day FRENCHBAT Lieutenant Colonel de Camaret (Frenchbat medical chairman) was at the head of a very special mission in the south of Kabul near Baburs' tomb.

The purpose was to deliver medicine, drugs, and medical tools to AWOSA organisation's dispensary. "All the team was concerned and gave a hand to the project" underlines OR1 Attagnant, a fierce looking but careful medic of the French For-

eign Legion. After a very charming lady presented the doctor the project she is setting up in the south of Kabul, it was decided to do the best to support this programme.

The lady's name is Mrs. Sima Tabib, and after more than 24 years of exile in Switzerland she came back to Afghanistan a year ago. She founded AWOSA, a non-governmental organization called "Afghan Woman and Orphan Supporting Association". With her own money she built a dispensary in the compound of the house she was born in (a house which has suffered much in 20 years of war). Very concerned about women's health issues, she employs a doctor, Mrs. Amina Shams, and two senior nurses Mrs. Nouria Karimi, and Soheila Ibrahimi. The medical equipment and facilities were made available with the help of a German based non-governmental organisation.

For the best conditions of treatment, she looked for the best treatment and equipment means she

could find. Speaking fluent French, she addressed a French NGO who gave her the FRENCHBAT address. She introduced herself and briefed them about her association.

Dr. de Camaret was astounded by the energy and confidence of this lady. "The strength of persuasion she's got is amazing, and her project to care about pregnant women and especially those in need is very important for Afghanistan". The fact that she chose to open a public compound strengthens the importance of her action. The main goal is to reduce pregnancy problems and to prevent post birth sanitary and medical complications.


"A woman who is disabled after having a baby, or a child who suffers post natal problems is one of the most acute problem of this country", insists Mrs. Tabib. "Last Sunday we had two babies born in the dispensary, mummies and babies were at their best, we were so proud of it", she added.



Corporal Attagnant, medic of FRENCHBAT explains to nurse Karami how to manage some of the aid supplies.

Mrs. Sima Tabib (center, in black) and her nurse are pleased to receive help from Doctor de Camaret, French battalion surgeon (first row).



The second step of the mission she gave to herself is to re open the furniture factory that her father left in the end of the 70's. Women's care, employment and economic development are the main concerns of a lady who decided alone to come back home. "I am no young woman now, but I have so much to do, it's a new beginning for my country and me." The lady named the medical compound Aziz, her fathers' first name – showing the past provides a strong link with the future. 





# Pakistani Frigate Tariq Safeguards Gulf of Oman as Part of Coalition Task Force

**A**BOARD PNS TARIQ, Gulf of Oman – Pakistani Naval Ship (PNS) Tariq (DDG 181) conducted a Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) drill in the Gulf of Oman May 9.

Tariq's VBSS missions support maritime security operations (MSO) in the Gulf of Oman under the direction of Commander, Task Force 150. CTF 150, led by British Commodore Tony Rix, operates as part of Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command. CTF 150 has included forces from the United States, France, Germany, Pakistan and the United Kingdom. These coalition vessels conduct security operations in the Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Aden to set the conditions for security and stability in the maritime environment.

MSO complements the 5<sup>th</sup> Fleet region's counter-terrorism and security efforts by denying international terrorists the use of the maritime environment as a venue for attack or to transport personnel, weapons or other material.

"When monitoring this area, it is important for us to check all of the merchant vessels because you never know what terrorists will use to transport their goods," said Tariq Commanding Officer Capt. Muhammad Amjad. "We want to intercept terrorists as well as their materials. Their basic financing is through the smuggling of drugs and weapons, so we want to disrupt that as well."

Since deploying April 16, Amjad said his ship has ensured no vessel that comes through his area of responsibility goes unchecked.

"We have queried all the merchant vessels, visited all the dhows and continually update [Commander, U.S. Naval Forces



On photos: On May 12, 2005 the crew of USS *Mustin* rescued 27 people from the burning vessel *Olympias* in the Arabian Gulf 27 miles off of the coast of Iran.

Central Command] on all of our findings," Amjad said.

"There is a lot of illegal activity in this area, and the Pakistani ships have contributed a lot. We have been helpful in apprehending suspects of interests and have even helped take some suspicious boats back to Pakistan for further investigation."

VBSS team captain Lt. Uzair Khalid said he and his team usually board at least two vessels every day. When lookout personnel spot a vessel in the water, Tariq's bridge team notifies the captain. The ship then closes in to initiate contact with the vessel either with the ship's communications system or, if necessary, by loudspeaker. Khalid and his Visit, Board, Search and Seizure team board a vessel if the ship cannot establish communications or if there is reason to be suspicious of the vessel.

"We have two eight-man teams," said Khalid. "The first is the security team. They go initially to secure the area. When everything is safe, we bring on our second team, called the sweep team, to ask questions and conduct inspections."

The vessel queried May 9 as part of the drill was not suspicious, and provided the boarding team with all necessary documentation to prove their legitimacy. Even so, every boarding is critical to maintaining safety and security of the sea, Khalid said. "Our mission is to safeguard these waters, and we ensure, at all costs, that the mission is accomplished."



In addition to daily VBSS missions, the multi-mission anti-submarine, anti-surface ship Tariq also takes measures against piracy; responds to distress calls by merchant vessels; and provides search and rescue capability through its embarked helicopter squadron, commanded by Cmdr. Mohammed Masud Akram.


"We augment the mission of the ship, whatever it is," said Akram. "Most often, we are engaged in search and rescue missions, but because we are part

of a ship that operates with coalition forces, we can also assist in searches of suspect vessels. If the ship is too far away from a suspected dhow, or the sea state is very bad, we can conduct a query by helo and report back to the ship."

The squadron contains one helicopter and 12 men who are integrated into Tariq's 250-man crew. This is Tariq's second deployment to the Gulf of Oman. The ship was also part of CTF 150 from June to August of 2004. Tariq is one of six Pakistan Navy ships that have been deployed since April, 2004. Combined, the Pakistan Navy has queried more than 3,200 vessels in the 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

Pakistani Radar Technician Sailor Azad Bukhari, who has been in the Navy for less than five years, has been aboard Tariq for both deployments and is proud of the mission he and his ship are doing.

"We are saving the world," said Bukhari. "We work together with America and other navies because this job is not for one nation. It's for the entire world."

"We are all humans first, not Christians or Muslims," said Bukhari. "As humans, our needs and wants are equal, and we all want freedom. Terrorism threatens freedom. By fighting terrorists at sea, we are an iron wall against that threat. We are saving the world from terrorism." 



# NATO Snapshots



## Extra Troops for Afghanistan



### Swedish Troops to Relieve UK Efforts

**S**TOCKHOLM – Sweden will take over Britain's military command of security for reconstruction efforts in north Afghanistan around Mazar-e-Sharif to let British troops focus on fighting insurgency in the south, Sweden said on Tuesday.

The handover, to be phased in between November and next March, will mean non-NATO member Sweden will raise the number of its troops in Afghanistan to 160 from 90, Lieutenant Colonel Anders Svensson told Reuters.

Swedish Defense Minister Leni Bjorklund met her U.S. counterpart Donald Rumsfeld on Monday to discuss the plans, which she presented to Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai in Kabul three weeks ago.

"Sweden's role will be to bring together both the civil development and military support necessary to ensure security

is maintained," Bjorklund told Swedish Radio from Washington on Tuesday.

"There are groups in the area who are not very happy that the government is expanding outside Kabul," she said.

Swedish troops currently serve under British command as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force.

Their main task is to provide security for non-governmental organizations helping to rebuild the country.

Sweden, which is a member of NATO's "Partnership for Peace" program for cooperation with non-member states, has played an active role in U.N. and European Union peacekeeping operations in Africa and the Balkans.

But the country's long tradition of neutrality meant its non-interference in the war in Iraq. <sup>CB</sup>

## Afghanistan May Build Its First International Rail Link in 2006



**T**he government of Afghanistan plans to build its first international railway, linking the former Taliban stronghold city of Kandahar in the south, to Pakistan, said Public Works Minister Shorah Ali Safari. Minister submitted a proposal to Afghan President Hamid Karzai's cabinet and hopes the project will be approved this year for construction to start in 2006.

The country now has less than a kilometer (three-fifths of a mile) of railroad, built by the Soviet Union to supply its troops. Afghanistan, with a population of 29 million, prevented the British and Soviets from building railways, seeing them as invasion tools.

"Time has changed," said Safari, 60, speaking in the Iranian city of Mashad. "Trains are no longer used to invade countries – they'll boost our economy and benefit our people."



First Afghan railway from Darulaman to Kabul in 1923, first official tour.

Safari was in Mashad with ministers from Central Asian countries, Pakistan and Iran at the opening ceremony of a railway linking Central Asia to the Persian Gulf. The route will be used to carry goods such as sulphur, minerals and cotton.

"Engineering studies on the planned Afghanistan railway – running 100 kilometers between Kandahar, the former base of the Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, to the Pakistani border town of Chamman – have been completed," the minister said. Construction work should be "relatively easy" since the track will cross "plain territory, with no mountains and thus no tunnels to be built." <sup>CB</sup>



## Denmark to Participate in Afghanistan's Reconstruction

**V**ILNIUS – Danish Defense Minister Soeren Gade said here Tuesday that Denmark is to participate in a NATO mission in Afghanistan led by Lithuania for the reconstruction of a western province.

Gade, who is on a visit to Lithuania, told reporters that the decision had been approved in his country, and the military authorities of Denmark and Lithuania will discuss and map out details of their coordinated actions sometime later.

Denmark will provide the most needed assistance to Lithuania, pledged Gade.

Lithuania decided recently to lead one of four multinational missions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) – Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) – that have been set up in western Afghanistan.

The PRT, which groups small squads of military and civilian personnel, aims to promote security and development in their respective provinces and help bring the area under the control of the central government.

The team led by Lithuania will be responsible for the reconstruction of Gor province.

Besides Denmark, Iceland has agreed to join the Lithuanian team, while Latvia and Sweden have also shown interest.

The team led by Lithuania is initially composed of some 70 people, who will arrive at the capital city of Gor province in August or September to start operation there, according to officials.

The team is expected to expand to some 150 people in October. <sup>CB</sup>